Manon Lilis

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Not Dark at All.

A CHILD lay dying, but still her brow was clear.
Sad faces drooped around, but on her own
No shadow darkened. Was the end unknown
To her young heart? And struck with sudden fear,
Lest death should take her by surprise, "My dear,"
Her mother whispered, "thou wilt soon be gone;
But, oh, my lamb will not be left alone.
Thou art in death's dark vale, but Christ is near."

The child looked wondering in her mother's face.
"I am in no dark vale," she said, and smiled.
"I see the light: it is not dark at all!"
Love, thou didst light death's valley for that child.
And, to the childlike soul that trusts thy grace,
Thus wilt thou come, when death's dark shadows fall!
—*Chamber's Journal.*

"A Lie is a Lie."

"WHAT! not tell an innocent fib to escape
From a harassing bore when you're busy,
Or to get youself out of a troublesome scrape?"
"No, a lie is a lie," said Lizzie.

"But a *little white* lie now you wouldn't attack—
A rat's not an elephant, is he?"
"No, a rat is a rat, whether white, gray, or black;
And a lie is a lie," said Lizzie.

"By subtle distinction some *may* be perplexed,
Some brains made by argument dizzy;
But I know I am right and I'll stick to my text:
A lie is a lie," said Lizzie.—*Sel.*

"LIFE is a volume,
From youth to old age,
Each year forms a chapter,
Each day is a page.
May none be more charming,
More tenderly true,
Than that, pure and noble,
Sketched yearly by you."

Hepzibah's Son John.

THERE, girls, not another step! Now, run back to mother as fast as ever you can," said John Bartlett, as he stopped with his two sisters, Bessie and Bertha, in the shelter of the school-house that stood by the side of the road.

"O Johnny! mother said half-way, and this isn't any thing near half," said Bess.

"I don't mind the snow one bit," chirped Bertie, drawing her little woolen shawl over her curls, and looking as merry as a snow-bird.

"But I must mind for you," said Johnny, putting his hands in his pockets, and trying to look brave; but his lip trembled as he added, "It was only a squall when we started, and now it is a storm. If it blows like this you would not be able to find the road."

"Yes, I suppose we must go back, but O, Johnny!—"

"Never mind, Bess. I shall be home for Christmas, and I shall have two weeks' wages then. I'll bring you something pretty," he said, turning abruptly to kiss Bertie, who clung to his neck, and felt something like melting snow-flakes falling upon her cheeks.

Backward the girls went, hand in hand, to the little house, where their mother was waiting for them. Forward the boy went toward the town, where he had been promised work in a large grocery store, work by which he could keep the little family together back in their childhood's home.

"To keep the family together," that had been the one longing of the Widow Bartlett's heart, and the object of the ceaseless labor of her hands ever since her husband died. And she had

done it until now by her sewing, or by nursing the sick when she could not find sewing to do. Brave little helpers the children had been. John did the work on her few stony fields, and made his mother's garden yield much of their food. He raised chickens, and sold the eggs and poultry; bought the wood standing in the lot, and cut it himself; worked out the taxes on the road, and in his mother's night nursing was as fatherly to the girls as if his young shoulders had supported an older head. And in all his efforts Bess was equally a comfort and help, while the frolicsome little Bertie was the pet of both.

With all her own and her children's work, a winter of scarlet fever for the little ones, and another of rheumatism for herself, had driven the widow to terrible extremities, and put that cruel thing, a mortgage, upon their little home. And this it was that, combined with Mrs. Bartlett's failing health, had driven John away.

"There would be one less to feed," he murmured, as he thought with a great gulp in his throat, of the piece of corn bread his mother pretended not to want at breakfast. Full of brave purposes for the future, with which he tried to stifle the pain of this first parting, John pushed on his way. For two days it had been snowing at intervals. The highway from Inwood, his home, to the town of Coldhill, was kept open by constant travel, but the snow-drifts piled high against the hedges and stone walls. As he approached the suburbs, he noticed how the snow had drifted against the picket-fence that surrounded a low stone house, completely obliterating the gate and the path to the door. To John the house looked half-buried and desolate, and yet from one chimney a thread of smoke seemed struggling. He had nearly passed, when a faint cry brought him to a sudden halt. Again it was repeated, and this time the boy pushed his slow way to the rear of the house, where he found a back door open, and between the stone step and the wall lay the prostrate figure of a gray-haired woman.

It took but a moment to lift her in his strong young arms, and help her over the threshold to a sofa by the smouldering fire. He rubbed her chilled hands, and touched her forehead gently with snow, for her pallid lips told him she had fainted. Though she speedily recovered consciousness, yet she seemed in great suffering, and though she shut her teeth resolutely together, every breath was a stifled moan of pain. She watched the lad closely as he vigorously fed the dying fire, but had not yet spoken. John read her question in her eyes.

"I am John Bartlett," he said, "and I was going to Coldhill, when I heard you call. I want to run now for the doctor."

"No, no, don't leave me; yes, go. I must have the doctor. Go quickly; I cannot move my arm," and John, covering her with a blanket from the bed, started away as fast as the snow would let him, down the main street of the town, asking the first man he met where the nearest physician could be found. "Just there round the corner," was the answer, and in five minutes more the boy was driving back with the doctor.

"First house beyond the village on the Inwood turnpike. Well, that is old Hepzibah Hawkins's house. Wonder she let you in at all; she don't believe much in boys."

"Why not?" asked John, eagerly. "She didn't seem afraid of me."

"Well, it's too long a story," said the doctor. "She's a nice woman, is Hepzibah, and was very fond of her brother, who died and left her his son. She first gave herself and her time and her money to this boy.

"What became of him at last?" asked John.

"Well, at last he stole from her all the money he could lay his hands on and ran away to sea and was drowned. Took the money, too, when she was ill in bed, and when he pretended to have come home penitent and ready to reform. That last blow was too much for Miss Hepsy. She shut up her house and herself, and has lived alone ever since. And if there is one thing she hates and will go around the corner to avoid, it's a boy!"

"Here we are! This is the house," said John, briskly.

"Yes, yes, I know the place;" and he hastened within, leaving John to fasten the horse. Before this was done, however, the doctor returned.

"Here, my boy, drive back as fast as you can and get my assistant. Tell him to bring ether. More lively, for we have a broken shoulder to deal with."

John went; but the assistant was out, and the lad came back with the ether to the doctor, who grumbled, and scolded, and ended by calling upon John, who proved so dexterous and helpful that the doctor asked him how he had learned.

"I never learned, but sometimes in mother's

hard cases I have watched at night and helped her lift the patients."

"And where is your mother?"

"At home, in Inwood," said John; "but she is not strong enough for such work now. If she was she could take beautiful care of her."

"I don't know where to look to-night," said the doctor, "and yet she must have care; can you stay, while I go and look up somebody?"

"Yes; but I ought to go on to Mr. Jones's, the grocer, this evening. I may lose my place."

"Your place is here, my boy," said the doctor, authoritatively. "I know Jones. I'll see him on my way home."

And before John realized his position, he was left to care for the sufferer, who lay with closed eyes, and quite silent, except once, when he gave her water. Then she said, abruptly, "So your name is John? I never use that name. Unless I could be made over into a happy old woman, I could never call any one John. Have you no other name?"

"My name is John Walter Bartlett. Walter was my mother's name."

Just here the sound of sleigh-bells drew near and in a moment the doctor entered, accompanied by a woman, well wrapped from the cold.

"Why, mother, dear mother, you are not strong enough for this."

"Yes, she will be strong enough, for you are to help her. She can tell you what to do, and I trust you two to pull Miss Hawkins through."

"But the girls?" said John.

"Bessie is coming to help outside the sick-room, and the doctor says Bertie is to make him a visit. He would not take 'no' for an answer."

So it was all settled. And after this followed days of such careful nursing, as poor Hepzibah had never known in all her lonely years. Bessie came, and little Bertie went to be petted and spoiled at the doctor's house. And John, or Walter, as "Hepzy" called him, became so indispensable to her that the grocer agreed to wait a month.

Before that month was over Aunt Hepzibah called him to her side one day; he came bringing his book, which he supposed she wished him to go on reading.

"No, put away the book," she said, "I want to talk to you," and she regarded him with eyes that were more than kind.

"I ought to have had a son like you, Walter," she said, locking and unlocking her thin fingers; "but the boy I took into my home was not"—she paused—"that boy is dead; I have no relations; I have some property; enough to educate and start you well in life."

For a moment John was bewildered. "Be educated!" Ah! how he had longed for this no one knew. But the flush of delight and gratitude faded in a moment, as he said,

"It would be wonderful to be educated; but—but—"

"But what?" she asked gently.

"My mother! She has worked for me so long and so hard, now I must work for her, and I could not, if—if my duty was to you. No, it is very good, very, but I—I want to be my mother's son."

"But I will care for her," she said. "I will pay off the mortgage, Walter."

"No, no," he answered, blushing deeply. "It would not be right. We could not live on you. I want to pay off the mortgage and take care of mother myself."

And so it was. His mother and sisters went home. He went to live at the grocer's; but many a quiet evening found him reading to Miss Hepzibah by the cheerful parlor fire. And when, two years later, her sad life ended, he found that the mortgage had long ago been paid; that the old farm could be sold now, for to his mother had been left the Hawkins home; and all else that belonged to the dear, kind soul was left to him whom in her will she named "John," her "dear adopted son."—*Sel.*

Exercise.

No faculty is developed, no quality is acquired, no power is gained, except by constant exercise. If we desire our young people to grow up into valuable men and women, we must accustom them gradually but steadily to assume responsibility, to exert their will and force of character, to give out as well as to take in, to act as well as to learn. Then life will be a succession of steps naturally following each other, each of which will prepare the way easily and thoroughly for the next, and each of which will bring new light, broader views, and higher abilities to bear upon increasing duties and responsibilities as they arise.

THERE are lots of people who never know anything until they run against it, and then they know too much.

For the Myrtle.

Advice Wanted.

What would you do
If you were me,
To teach this dog
His A. B. C?

He sulks, and sometimes
Barks with rage,
And won't look on
The printed page.

E. M. B.

Habits of Owls.

The chief peculiarity of owls is their mode of flying and their quick sense of hearing. Their food being mostly mice and other small animals which easily hide themselves in the ground, great silence and clear sight are necessary as well as quick hearing. So we find the wing of an owl is provided with feathers so remarkably soft and pliant that in striking the air they make no rushing sound as the feathers of other birds do.

There is something in the strange appearance and silent flights of owls that has made them often feared; and superstitious people have thought them always ominous of evil. But there is hardly a more useful bird anywhere. Its food consists of vermin and insects that would do great harm to the crops; and the farmers ought to be very thankful to the quiet owls which go around the fields in the dark and pounce upon all the mice and insects that would injure the corn.

The owls mostly eat the mice whole, without any attempt to tear them with their claws. But if they have young ones, they carry the mice home to the nest in their mouths, and sometimes they have been known to carry as many as forty mice in an hour to the hungry little ones who were waiting for food.—*Sel.*

A LADY was once lamenting the ill-luck which attended her affairs, when a friend, wishing to console her, bade her "look upon the bright side." "Oh," she sighed, "there seems to be *no* bright side!" "*Then polish up the dark one,*" was the quick reply.

IF instead of a gem, or even a flower, we would cast the gift of a lovely thought into the heart of a friend, that would be giving as the angels must give.

For the Mrytle.

Disobedient Children.

MR. SEVERANCE was a very skillful farmer. He had great pride in the fruitfulness of his fields. The crops from them were as good as any in the market. He was proud of his barns, and the arrangements of sheds for sheltering his cattle. But most of all, he was proud of the stock on his farm, on which he expended more money than was always thought prudent by those who watched his plans and purchases.

Among these purchases, was, one summer a remarkably fine colt which had never been broken to harness, but which gave great promise of future excellence and usefulness.

He had particularly charged his children that they were never, under any circumstances, to frighten or annoy the animals on the farm.

But, the afternoon of the day on which the colt was brought home, they were out picking corn in a field adjoining the pasture into which the colt had been turned.

Ellen, the older of the girls, thought it would be nice sport to see how fast they could make the colt run.

She proposed to the two younger children, that they should cut some stalks of corn, and going with them into the pasture, run, shaking them in their hands.

But said Harry, who was a very conscientious

little boy. "You know papa said that we must never frighten the horses."

"Do you think that a corn stalk would frighten a horse? He must be a bigger fool than I think if he would be frightened by so slight a thing as that," said Ellen.

The little children were easily persuaded, as they thought their older sister ought to know better about what was right than they, and so they cut the corn-stalks and ran with them into the pasture.

The colt at once took fright, and at a bound was off across the field.

Now the children were excited, and with loud shouts they ran after him.

An older horse would have easily recovered from his panic, when he saw how much faster he could run than those little children, but the colt did not know enough to measure distance, and with each bound, he grew more and more excited.

He had crossed the field and was close upon stone wall which surrounded it, before he discovered his danger. His head had been turned looking toward the children, and he did not see the wall until he was right upon it. Then he tried to turn, but it was too late, and he reared thinking to leap the wall, but was too close to it, and catching his feet, he fell, headlong over the wall breaking his neck, and dying instantly.

Never will those children forget the day which followed.

The loss of the colt was serious to the farmer, but the loss of confidence in his children was more serious. He had never till then thought that they would willingly disobey him, and bitter sadness for him, and for them followed this discovery.

It will be a long time before he is able to trust them as fully as he did before this unfortunate day of disobedience.

Though they have renewed their promises and have shown themselves truly sorry for the wrong they did, and solemnly say that they will never disobey the father again it will be long before he can feel toward them as he did before this sad event happened.

E. M. B.

If you cannot pray over a thing, and cannot ask God to bless you in it, don't do that thing. A secret that you would keep from God is a secret that you should keep from your own heart.

Prairie Life.

No. IV.

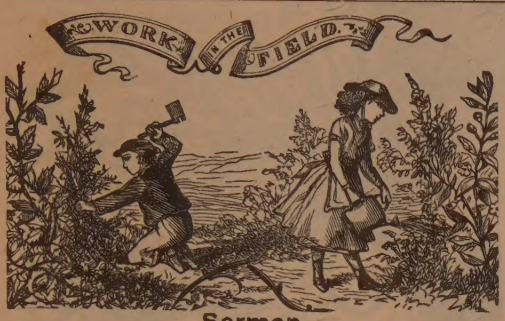
WILD FLOWERS.

Early in April, before the grass begins to be green, all over the prairies springs up a beautiful little flower that the children call May-flowers, but a lady has since told us they are called the "White Lily of the Mountains."

They have a few pale green leaves that grow close to the ground like a dandelion, and out of the centre spring pure white blossoms, each one standing on a stem by itself like a crocus—sometimes there will be five of them and sometimes fifteen or twenty in one cluster. You would not think to look at the dry grass on the prairie (which is short and curls close to the ground) that anything could grow there. In April we have snow and showers of rain, and the sun comes out very warm and as long as the moisture comes, things grow wonderfully. I cannot begin to describe the variety of wild flowers that appear as the days go by. In sweet little clusters, looking much prettier than they ever did in their rank growth in grandmother's garden, all over the bottom-land blooms the Spider Lily. All along the edges of cultivated fields and anywhere, where the sod has been broken, flourishes that pretty foliage plant that Eastern gardeners cultivate under the name of "Snow of the Mountain." Wild white morning-glories trail all over our vegetable garden where they are a troublesome weed in their determination to grow. The sweet-smelling white abronia covers the ground in places with its beautiful blossoms. Near the mountain the penstemon and larkspur grow in great luxuriance. Innumerable varieties which never have been named blossom all over our plains, especially in seasons when it rains a great deal. Where the irrigating ditches overflow, the flowers soon celebrate the fact by springing up and showing their bright faces. There is a charm in hunting for lovely flowers in the woody places where they delight to hide in the East, that prairie May-flowering parties miss, but no one can help loving the prairie flowers that do so much to cheer the loneliness of prairie life.

H. H. D,

True politeness simply consists in treating others as you would like to be treated yourself.



Sermon.

Lead us not into temptation.—*Matt.* vi. 13.

"Would you think after we had heard the Lord's prayer so many hundr eds and repeated it so many thousands of times, that we could get any new ideas about it?" Lucy asked as the children gathered round the evening lamp.

"Yes, I don't know but I should," Andrew replied "for there are so many ways of putting things that I would hardly know my own name when I hear some people speak it."

"Well, I certainly did get to thinking more intensely to-day while our minister was preaching from that text 'lead us not into temptation' than I have ever thought before."

"Do you mean that yon saw the ways in which you would be likely to be tempted more clearly than you have ever seen them before?"

"No. I did not mean exactly that. But I saw that all human beings may become weak when they are brought under the influence of temptation, and go down under them as wax is melted when it is thrust into the flame.

There are a great many sins which you and I feel no inclination to commit at this time, and we think we should never have any inclination to them, but this simply because the temptation is not near us at the present time. Thousands of other people who are committing those sins now, thought once about them just as you and I are thinking to-day."

"Do you mean to say Lucy, that you think you or I, brought up carefully as we have been, and taught the difference between right and wrong, would ever yield to the temptation to steal under any possible circumstances?"

"Yes Andrew, strange as it may sound to you to hear me say this, I do think, after hearing the sermon, which I heard this morning, that there might be circumstances in which we might do even that wrong.

It hardly seems possible to us now, surrounded as we are by every thing that can make for our comfort that we should ever be tempted to take that for which we could not honestly pay. But, Andrew, neither you nor I have ever in our lives been famishing for want of food, and had a loaf of bread placed temptingly within our grasp. We do not know ourselves Andrew. If we were suffering the pangs of hunger, we *might* steal. Or other temptations might come to us which we think now would not affect us. They might come in a way that we know not of, and sweep us down before we were aware.

Our minister illustrated by this story of a woman, who until the time when her great temptation came, had never before gambled. The case occurred in Italy, at the village of Monte Carlo, in the principality of Monaco. Monto Carlo is beautifully situated on the Mediterranean Sea, but is cursed by the fascinations of an infamous gambling establishment. To this village a young German went with his bride on his wedding trip. The young man had made collections for his employer during his travels in Italy. Knowing the temptations of the village, he placed the sum of forty thousand francs, belonging to his employers, in the hands of his bride for safe keeping, while he went out alone to view the village.

Unfortunately his bride, while walking a short distance from the hotel, came to the Casino. Prompted by curiosity, she crossed the accursed threshold. While standing near one of its tables watching the gamblers play, some of the syrens of the place joined her, and in insidious phrases talked to her about the game and its players.

"Why not venture a small sum?" they said. "The risk is not great."

Thoughtlessly she accepted the wily suggestion, and lost a trifling amount. Then her smiling tempters said in insinuating tones:

"Try again, madame. Your luck will turn, and you will win."

Again she placed some gold coins on the table, and again she lost. Another venture was followed by another loss. Then the insanity of the gaming table seized her. She played and played again, until the last franc intrusted to her care by her confiding young husband was gone. Then the import of her act stared her in the face like a ghastly specter. In losing those francs she had stained her bridegroom's honor. She had ruined his reputation and blasted his life prospects. The horror of her situation appalled her. Her reason forsook its throne. Scarcely knowing what she was doing, she fled to the rocks which overhung the sea and leaped into the pitiless waters beneath. From being the happy bride of a happy husband, she thus suddenly became the hapless bride of death.

Had this unfortunate young lady trained herself fo act, not suddenly from impulse, but after thoughtful inquiry into the right or wrong of each separate act, this tragedy would not have been. When, standing at the door of the Casino, she would have asked herself, "Is it right for me to enter here?" then the voice within her heart would have whispered, in substance if not in terms, "No! the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked." Thus warned and instructed, she would probably have turned away from that gate-way of ruin and death. But not being mistress of herself, she was ruled by an idle impulse, which pushed her into temptation and destruction.

Our Sunday Schools.

ILLINOIS.

A letter from Litchfield says: "Our Sunday school is growing in every respect, and has a bright outlook for the future. We expect soon to add a new supply of books to our library. Our little people think the MYRTLE is a great treat, and could not get along without it. We shall need a larger number, soon."

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

268.—ENIGMA.

I am composed of 26 letters.
My 11, 4, 20 is a plaything.
My 9, 10, 11 is not at all lean.
My 1, 15, 3, 17 is attached to the arm.
My 26, 22, 10, 17 is a street.
My 5, 15, 18 is what cats catch.
My 24, 25, 14 is a feminine pronoun.
My 6, 2, 16 is a heavy weight.
My 19, 13, 21 is a certain stitch in sewing.
My 2, 3, 25 is a number.
My 25, 15, 14 is a feature.
My 7, 2, 21, 25 is the dearest place on earth.
My 12, 13, 5, 17 is a large number of cattle.
My whole is one of the Bible commandments.

M. S. Collar.

269.—ANAGRAM.

Dprei otgeh ebfreo escdutnroti nda a ghubyat tiprsi efober a lfla. *Calla and Lizza.*

270.—ENIGMA.

I am composed of thirteen letters.
My 6, 2, 11 is an animal.
My 2, 6, 7, 10 is pain.
My 7, 8, 11 is a place of shelter.
My 1, 2, 12 is what you place in front of a door.
My 12, 10, 5 is a beverage.
My 3, 7, 8, 12 is not open.
My 4, 2, 1 is a boy's nickname.
My 9, 5, 8, 6, 10 is something you eat with food.
My 13, 10, 2 is a big body of water.
My whole is a State. *Frank.*

271.—ENIGMA.

I am composed of 70 letters.
My 1, 2, 3, 4 is an evil drink.
My 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 is not weak.
My 67, 68, 69, 70 is not foolish.
My 66, 65, 64 is a measure of coal.
My 35, 33, 34, 32, 12, 13 is peril.
My 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54 is cheated.
My 10, 37, 44, 45, 46, 55 is our Savior.
My 10, 9, 8, 48 is the opposite of go.
My 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 is what we do with tea.
My 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 is opposite of calm.
My 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61 is opposite of hereby.
My 37, 38, 41 is used in a garden.
My 6, 5, 26, 15, 43, 44 is a near relative.
My 42, 7, 39, 41 is used to hold flowers.
My 36, 25, 23, 11 is done with eyelids.
My 3, 4, 5, 19, 37, 60, 40, 62, 63 are those near by.
My whole is in Proverbs.

Sarah F. Miles.

262.—ENIGMA.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

263.—ANAGRAM.

Be kind in all you say or do.

264.—ENIGMA.

Wisdom is better than strength.

265.—DIAMOND PUZZLE.

W
M A T
W A T E R
T E A
R

266.—ANAGRAM.

Strive to do right.

267.—ENIGMA.

A selfish child is always unhappy.

OUR HARVESTERS.

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